



CHESTERFIELD COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Department: Human Resource Management
Subject: Workplace Violence

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I. MINIMIZING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Chesterfield County seeks to provide a work environment that minimizes workplace violence or other security risks. Violence in the workplace poses a threat to the safety of employees and the public and affects productivity. All employees are responsible for minimizing workplace violence. This policy establishes procedures that minimize the threat of violence in the workplace, without restricting appropriate public access to county employees and facilities, and provides guidelines for responding promptly and effectively to workplace violence.

II. WHAT IS WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- A. **Workplace Violence** – Any intentional act that inflicts, attempts to inflict, or threatens to inflict bodily hurt on another person or that inflicts, attempts to inflict, or threatens to inflict, damage to property, whether committed by a county employee or by anyone else and which occurs in a county workplace, at a County site location or while an employee is engaged in County business.
- B. **Workplace** – All county property and any other locations where county employees are performing their work.

III. ADOPTING DEPARTMENTAL PLANS TO MINIMIZE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- A. **Facility Risk Assessment** – The department director/office administrator or designee must conduct and maintain an assessment of the risk of workplace violence or other security risks that exist as a result of the nature of the work and physical environment of the department. The Workplace Violence Resource Team or designee shall conduct the risk assessment for all county property that is not in the control of a specific department. The Workplace Violence Resource Team shall develop guidelines for facility risk assessments and shall consult with departments if requested to do so (see ATTACHMENT I).

At the conclusion of the facility risk assessment, the department shall complete a written report and submit it to the Workplace Violence Resource Team for review. The facility risk assessment report may include recommendations, for which budgeted funds are available, to alter the physical environment and make it more secure from the risk of violent acts, while at the same time maintaining an appropriate level of public access to the department's employees and facilities.

The facility risk assessment must be approved by the Workplace Violence Resource Team. The Workplace Violence Resource Team may review and revise the report or return it to the department for further review.

Copies of the risk assessment report shall be kept by the department and by the Workplace Violence Resource Team. It is the department's responsibility to review the risk assessment report annually and at any time the department's physical environment changes, the nature of the work performed by the department changes, and at such other times as determined by the Risk Manager or Workplace Violence Resource Team.

- B. **Department Security Procedures** – The Workplace Violence Resource Team shall provide each department with generic departmental procedures for minimizing and effectively responding to workplace violence. A department may modify the generic procedures to meet

its unique circumstances. These written procedures shall provide for prompt reporting of workplace violence to the Police Department and to all employees and other persons who could be physically affected by workplace violence. These procedures will provide guidelines to supervisors on how to respond to employees whose work performance or safety is affected by workplace violence. These procedures shall also provide for on-going measures to minimize and respond to workplace violence that occurs away from county property for those departments that have employees who regularly perform duties away from county property. The Workplace Violence Coordinator or designee will assist departments in developing departmental procedures (see ATTACHMENT II). A department's procedures must be approved by the Workplace Violence Resource Team. Copies of a department's procedures shall be kept in the department and in HRM and shall be distributed to departmental employees.

IV. RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- A. **Employees' Responsibilities when Workplace Violence Occurs** – Employees shall respond promptly to workplace violence in accordance with their department's procedures.
- B. **Supervisors' Responsibilities when Workplace Violence is Reported** – Supervisors shall respond promptly to workplace violence in accordance with their department's procedures and shall orally report workplace violence to the Director/Office Administrator and to the Workplace Violence Coordinator as soon as possible.
- C. **Workplace Violence Involving Police Officers** – The Police Department's Office of Professional Standards shall investigate all complaints of workplace violence committed by and against police officers. Nothing contained in this policy is intended to alter the responsibility of the Office of Professional Standards to take appropriate action.
- D. **Reporting Workplace Violence** – All employees shall promptly report workplace violence to the Police Department and then to their supervisors. In emergency situations, employees may report workplace violence to supervisory or managerial level employees other than their own supervisors. Employees shall promptly report to their supervisors situations that they believe could lead to workplace violence, including but not limited to protective orders or other "no-contact" orders.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT AND THE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE RESOURCE TEAM

A. Management

Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that behaviors and actions that are likely to result in workplace violence are dealt with promptly, firmly and fairly. Disciplinary actions for violations will be consistent with county policies and procedures.

The county will not tolerate acts and behaviors that are likely to result in workplace violence and which may include but are not limited to abusive language, hitting or shoving, threats of bodily harm, threats or violence arising out of sexual or racial harassment, brandishing of an object which may be used as a weapon, insubordination, the sending of threatening, harassing or abusive e-mail and faxes, using the workplace to violate protective orders, and stalking.

County employees are prohibited from possessing firearms or other weapons on county property (except sworn personnel).

B. The Workplace Violence Resource Team

- 1. **Appointment and Purpose** – The Workplace Violence Resource Team (Resource Team) shall be appointed by the County Administrator to consult with and assist the Workplace Violence Coordinator in assisting County departments in preparing for, responding to and minimizing workplace violence. The Director of Human Resource Management shall serve as the Workplace Violence Coordinator.

2. ***Membership*** – The Resource Team shall be chaired by the Workplace Violence Coordinator. Membership on the team will include the County Domestic Violence Coordinator, Security Manager and membership from each of the following departments: Police, County Attorney, HRM and MH/MR/SA.

VI. TRAINING

- A. A significant element in minimizing workplace violence is a workforce trained in the identification of situations that are likely to result in workplace violence and in the handling and reporting of such situations. HRM, in consultation with the Resource Team, shall develop and provide training programs to inform employees of methods and procedures to identify, minimize and respond to such situations, whether perpetrated by a co-worker or by a third party.
- B. HRM, in consultation with the Workplace Violence Resource Team, shall develop and provide training to departments in conducting departmental facility risk assessments and developing departmental procedures (See ATTACHMENT III).

SAMPLE FACILITY RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

I. PERFORM BUSINESS ASSESSMENT

A. Identify Potential Risks and Vulnerabilities

1. What type of business does the department handle?
2. How much public contact is there?
3. Are there many employee terminations?
4. Is there a high stress level associated with the type of work done in the department?
5. Does the department handle cash transactions?
6. Consider the location of the building/department? Is it in a remote location or is it around other departments? Do employees work in the field?

II. ASSESS PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

A. Outside of Facility

1. Lighting
2. Shrubs
3. Hiding places
4. Obstructions (i.e. dumpsters) etc.

B. Access Control

1. Door and window locks
2. Number of public entrances
3. After hours lock down plan
4. Key control

C. Inside of Facility

1. Visitor and employee identification methods (I.D. badges, sign in procedures etc.)
2. Public areas and personal work spaces
3. Electronic security options (closed circuit TV, Card access, electromagnetic combination locks, door alarms and duress devices)

III. IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN WITHIN AVAILABLE BUDGET

Balance customer service (citizen access) with employee safety

IV. IMPLEMENT FACILITY SECURITY IMPROVEMENT

**SAMPLE DEPARTMENT SECURITY PROCEDURE GUIDELINES
TOPICS TO ADDRESS IN DEPARTMENT SECURITY PROCEDURE**

I. STAFF RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES

- A. Evaluate facility risk assessment as it applies to department staff and visitors
- B. Assess staff and visitor interactions
- C. Assess field operations

II. SAFETY STRATEGIES

Cash control, secondary door usage, duress devices, code names etc.

III. REPORTING ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Department reports, police reports, report to Workplace Violence Coordinator

IV. RESPONDING TO ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Develop a response plan

**TOPICS COVERED IN WORKPLACE VIOLENCE TRAINING
PROVIDED BY HRM**

How to conduct and write a Facility Risk Assessment

How to develop a Department Security Procedure

Warning signs of potentially violent individuals

Ways of minimizing or diffusing potentially violent situations

Role of Employee Assistance Program

Minimizing domestic violence in the workplace